thus been slain about seventy years earlier. It appears that attempts were commonly made to kill chiefs by means of sympathetic magic, and it is quite possible that such attempts, becoming known, preyed upon the minds of the victims to such an extent that death resulted.

WEALTH

Since wealth is so important in chieftainship, it would be desirable at this point to consider the concepts of wealth. Unfortunately, it is impossible to give a satisfactory treatment of this subject. The coming of the white man altered the economic aspects of Bella Coola life so radically, and at such an early period, that concrete examples of economic investigations, so useful in a thorough study, could not be obtained in the field. It is possible that greater attention to this subject might have produced more satisfactory results, but I am doubtful of this.

In the old days, "wealth" was of two categories: (a) Prerogatives, tangible or intangible, which could be shown, personally or dramatically, or could be expounded in words, and (b) Goods which could be distributed for validating such prerogatives. Individual possessions, retained for distribution, were hardly considered as wealth; a sewing-machine, a bottle of whiskey, a hoe, or some other luxury might give satisfaction to the owner, but did not increase his importance in the eyes of his fellows. The value of objects was only for their use in ceremonial distribution; indeed, prior to such distribution, they were only of potential value. This attitude controlled Bella Coola economics in the early days of contact, and still influences their behaviour. A native storekeeper once ruefully commented on the fact that he would gain no advantage from the goods on his shelves, since he hoped merely to sell them, not to give them away.

A man's relatives were expected to help him in the acquisition of goods, but the extent of their contributions was never

of his village, hence they will not fail to intervene upon them to intervene. But news travels, and in course of time the armed members of some other tribe will decide to send a raiding party against X's village. All informants agreed most emphatically that this custom prevailed among the coast people from the Trondiem country to Siem Bay, but specific examples could not be obtained. The Bulu Coolo regard such a raid as the proper course to pursue, and belligerent tribes may have used an irregularity in the polterch rites as an excuse for an assault. It is clear, however, that this custom never attained such prominence that it could be called a law.

The following is an instance of the Bulu Coolo outlook on the question:

The father of an informant had had such success in giving polterchim that his neighbours were jealous. On one occasion he prepared a representation of a whale, an elaborate wooden frame, fifteen feet long, covered by mats concealed within and covering passengers. (He was a figure which entered into his ancestral myth. One of the carpenters who made it, bribed by a jealous rival of the house of the polterch, arranged that the knee joint of the whale should fall in the fire during the proceedings. This revealed the mechanism of the structure. While influence on the coast prevented an invasion of foreign raiders, but according to this informant, the chief determined that the father should die, and then employed a sorcerer for this purpose. His father and eleven other villagers died soon afterwards. This man, the sole survivor, ascribes his escape to his adoption of Christianity.

Another instance of the possible attack follows events in polterch ritual occurred a few years ago, when a number of young men said the ceremonial whistles quietly, as if they had been seen. The presence of the whistles was prevented any open steps towards punishment, but before long all the youths died. No one knows what caused their deaths, though probably they were due to an upset in black magic acting on the instructions of a senior youth.

After the prayers, X and his family give warm food to their guests, whose home containing what they are to carry away are increasing in number. By his hospitality, X increases his prestige in the eyes of his fellow-villagers.

If he can afford to build a new house embodying the [illegible]

McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NEB Bellacoola NEB

701 difficult to estimate the former influence of such warriors. The belief of all in their ability must have given them some prestige, although the requirements of practical qualifications in fighting must often have prevented them from functioning as military leaders. In other words, a man may be, socially, a warrior, even though he lacks ability as a fighting man.

701 The functions of warriors are not limited to fighting with 693 enemies of other tribes. Each has the power to kill and must exercise it when requested. If a mistake is made in a cere- [688] monial *hecixt* dance, the offender must be killed, and one way [575] in which this is accomplished is by the senior members of the [428] society requesting a professional warrior to act as executioner. [411] One of these men, who lived at *Ánáx-áx-i*, always used a stone [754] club which had been handed down from generation to generation, becoming the property of each new incumbent of the name and prerogatives. In other cases, the killing is said to have been done with the aid of magic.[1] The power of the *Ánáx-áx-i* warrior had been conferred with so much gunk that he was the most powerful professional killer known to the Bella Coola. He acted on instructions from the senior members of the *hecixt* society or when called upon by anyone. If, [684] for example, a man found that his wife had been faithless and wished to kill her lover, it was only necessary to tell the professional warrior, who was bound to act in accordance with his prerogatives. He received no pay, since he was *merely* exercising his right. The relatives of the murdered person [682] never took revenge on the slayer, realizing that he was powerless in the matter, though they frequently requested him to slay the person who had asked him to kill the first victim. He could never refuse to do so, even if the victim were his own brother, or if he knew that the person he was to kill was guiltless. The underlying principle was that this man's power had [761] been increased to such a pitch by the distribution of presents that if he failed to exercise it on demand, it would react upon himself and cause his own death. This *Ánáx-áx-i* warrior began in time to have an aversion for his vocation, since he

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CHAPTER VIII

DEATH

Death Rites—Memorial Rites—Fate of the Dead

Death Rites

DEATH is marked by even more complicated and prolonged rites than marriage. Like so many primitive peoples, the Bella Coola not only carry out elaborate rituals soon after the actual decease, but hold lengthy commemorative and mourning ceremonials in later years. As these require the co-operation of a large number of people, the death of an individual affects a wider circle than his own relatives, and the celebrations have, therefore, an important social as well as religious significance. 76 196 [182]

OMENS OF DEATH

It is not surprising that the Bella Coola, believing in the omnipresence of the supernatural, should consider various peculiar occurrences to be omens of death. One of the simplest of these is to hear the falling of a tree when there is neither wind nor other reason to account for it. Such a fall is audible only to the person whom it warns of approaching death, either to himself or to one of his relatives. A number of men may be in the forest together, when one of them hears the crash of a tree and notices that his companions are unaware of it; he realizes that this is an omen and protects himself by calling out: 763

"Let this evil react against whoever has been plotting evil against me."

The basis of this custom is the belief that someone has been practising black magic against the hearer, who, by this answer, is able to cause the sorcery to recoil upon the malefactor. Even more dangerous than to hear a falling tree, is to have one crash [154] [824]

Library of the American Museum of Natural History
Boas Collection

CAUSES OF DEATH

961 The Bella Coola know that sickness, accident, wilful murder, old age, and a host of other factors may at any time terminate a man's life, but they consider that any one of these direct causes is possible only in conjunction with an indirect reason of a religious or supernatural nature; in the last analysis they attribute death to supernatural, not to natural causes. [775] As described in a previous chapter, an ancient myth attributes the origin of death to the stupidity of Raven, but this belief, even if its historical accuracy is accepted, belongs to the realm of philosophy and ancient history rather than to everyday life. 961 When a canoe is capsized on the ocean and its occupants are 776 drowned,—the Bella Coola do not consider a drowning a mere accident—it is because Semaqwe was hungry and desired human flesh. This indirect reason is quite as important as the direct one. So, too, the death of a man beneath a falling tree or a land-slide is no accident; *Sā'āwe* caused the tree to crash to earth or the slide to roll downwards. Most individuals believe that this supernatural being is responsible when an animal kills a hunter. He delights in death and always sits on [750] a coffin before it is taken to the grave, although none but shamans can see him. Any supernatural being can cause death, but it must not be imagined that the Bella Coola go through life in a state of constant fear; death may vanquish them in 953 the forests, but the probabilities are against it. Nor does sickness appear to them as a natural phenomenon. Its cause is either the intrusion of some foreign object into the body, or the weakness of one of the patient's supernatural elements. The only remedy in the latter case is an appeal to the super- [755] natural, sometimes through the medium of a shaman, whereas a foreign object in the body can often be extracted by a skilled [754] practitioner. A disease of this type is often brought on by the machinations of a sorcerer, and if death results it is attributed 761 to the potency of his charms, not to a natural ailment. Even [775] ghosts are able to cause death. In war, one man may be able [776]

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dance again in eight years. Four years later, one of his fellow-villagers offered him five skins for the one which he had used, and, when this was declined, the number was raised to ten, then to fifteen, and finally to twenty new bear-skins. As there was no particular value in the mantle itself, the owner became suspicious and asked advice from his mother who admonished him not to sell, in view of the time when he would want it. Accordingly, he did not accept the offer, but when it was increased to twenty-five skins he did so. He did not know that the purchaser's desire for it was to enable him to injure the seller by magic through the acquisition of this personal possession.

The sale took place in April, and the following December the former owner became crippled with a disease which so weakened his back that he could hardly raise himself from the ground. When the sickness had lasted for one year, his friends carried him away to the Hot Springs on Lakeuchare Channel.

It was known that if a patient were left night and day in the spring, scrubbing himself with hemlock boughs, he often was given such power by a supernatural being that, like a shaman of old, he could kill or cure by means of a stick. Many of this man's relatives had been killed by rivals envious of their success in giving potlatches, so it was feared that he might wish to retaliate if he gained too much power. To prevent this, he was removed from the spring at night. On the first day as he lay on a mat in the warm water, there appeared on a flat stone a diminutive man, about two feet tall, resembling a Bella Coola except for a short tail. It was probably a *tâqmd* &c. such as his first encounter had obtained (I, p. 688). The little creature ran around the stone; when it returned to the starting point it stopped and was joined by a second one of the same kind. The two circled the stone three times, on each occasion stopping at the starting point; they then vanished. The next day while the patient lay in the stream he heard from within the mountain four beats of a drum and a sound as if a large number of people were talking and calling together, though he

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757 the science of medicine. The Bella Coola are familiar with
789 many acts which cause definite results. To place a new-born
girl in contact with the representation of a beautiful woman
[856 so that she may grow up to be like her, seems false science,
752] magic, to the white man; whereas the application of splints
and gum to a fractured limb is a medical treatment, crude
perhaps, but definitely scientific. The two are identical to the
Bella Coola. They do not ask *why* or *how* a result follows,
they merely know that it *does*. Such lore has been handed
down from time immemorial; it is steeped in the sanctity of
antiquity and hallowed by the knowledge that their ancestors
have done the same for generations. All such acts may be
described as "medicines," for so they appear to those who
practise them. To separate them into magical and scientific
categories would misrepresent the native point of view; the
only division that can be made is between those that cause,
and those that prevent or cure. Even in this there is some
overlap. A medicine that cures a child from crying likewise
causes him to be placid and amiable; so, too, medicines of a
preventive nature comprise elements of both types. The prin-
ciple governing most of these is sympathetic magic, a concept
which, if put in words to the Bella Coola, would be regarded as
logical and scientific. The second important class of medi-
[755 cines consists of objects, either herbal or derived from the
human body, which are believed to have such abundant power
that they are effective against ailments of supernatural origin,
or against supernatural beings themselves. Some of these have
already been mentioned in connection with the attitude of
the Bella Coola towards these beings of the earth, sky,
and water.

● 754 Most curative medicines are used by the practitioner on
755 himself; most causative, on someone else. The latter are either
789 social or anti-social, depending upon whether the result is
benevolent or malevolent. Shamans frequently use magical
means in curing the sick and are highly regarded by the com-
munity, but medicines of the same kind may be used to kill

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
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and those who have knowledge of them are sorcerers. Even a man of this kind is not outside the pale of society unless he practises indiscriminately; members of the *kusiut* society, for example, frequently employ one to kill an individual who has offended against their regulations (I, p. 740). A man is regarded as a sorcerer not on account of his knowledge but on account of the ends to which he applies it.

Closely related to, if not identical with, the belief that certain consequences follow certain acts, is the conviction that the infraction of ritual prohibitions brings disaster. There are many such taboos, for so they may be called. Though most important at the critical periods of life, puberty, pregnancy, while observing ceremonial chastity, and so forth, there are many which must be obeyed at all times.

Restrictions pertaining to the river and regulations at birth and death have already been described. Like magical acts, these often verge on the religious owing to the belief that disregard offends supernatural beings. On the whole, however, it seems as if most infractions bring their own punishment without intervention of higher powers, a concept which throws taboos into the category of magic rather than of religion, with the ever-present proviso that the two cannot be separated entirely from one another. With them may be associated a number of ritual acts connected with fishing and hunting in which, though the element of propitiation is not absent, it is satisfied by the performance of definite rites. Finally, there have been included in this chapter a number of unimportant beliefs, the psychology of which cannot be analysed.

What is the basis of these rites defined as Medicine, Magic, and Taboo? As already described, the Bella Coola either do not explain their origin and function, or merely state that *Alquntām* is responsible, as he is for every activity of life. This is unsatisfactory because many which, viewed scientifically, have neither curative nor causative power, produce the desired end. A child who has been "made" a carpenter during infancy, usually grows up to be proficient in that profession; the person

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)948
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men had vanished. It is possible that in this particular case there was a belief that *Alquntâm* granted the wish when convinced that all had the same desire, but this element is often entirely lacking.

Belief in the power of thought is a concept which the investigator constantly meets in Bella Coola at the present day. For example, in 1921 a government official working in the valley, purchased a representation of a merganser which had been used in a ceremonial.[9] Although this should have been destroyed after use, no difficulty would have been raised if the transaction had remained a secret. Unfortunately, the buyer allowed the object to be seen by several Bella Coola and by some Carriers. This caused indignation throughout the community and news of it reached the Bella Bella, who concluded that the vendor would suffer disaster for allowing a secret object to be seen by the despised Indians of the interior. Within a year, his wife died. The Bella Bella believed that his sin had brought its own punishment, but the Bella Coola, who knew the details of the sale and did not consider the exposure of the article to have been the fault of the seller, attributed it to the power of the thoughts of the Bella Bella. They all expected that he would be punished; therefore he was punished; the expectation was sufficient to effect its own fulfilment. This incident was too fresh in the minds of several men to allow them to sell ceremonial objects to the writer.

The most common form taken by this conviction is with regard to death; if it is believed that a man will die, he is almost certain to do so. In June, 1922, a woman died in Bella Coola and her father claimed that she had been murdered by a certain man either with material poison or by magical means. He took no direct steps in revenge but stated emphatically that the man whom he suspected would die within a year. The threatened man knew of this, and more than once said that he

[9] The article, now in the National Museum of Canada, consists of a cloth and wood representation of a merganser canoe such as was used by *Nuxtâlx* in the beginning of time.

[illegible] E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
[illegible]

759 761 789 828 [625] would probably fall a victim. He became ill in May, 1923, and, though treated by a white doctor, grew steadily worse until he died in the latter part of June, three weeks after the year had elapsed. All the Bella Coola firmly believe that this was due to the power of thought. The father of the woman was a powerful chief whose thoughts were accordingly potent, and some consider that his concentrated desires and expectations were enough to kill the accused, while others believe that his expressed statements convinced others of the result, and that it was their combined thought that caused the death. It usually requires the thoughts of more than one individual to lead to this effect. The doctor who attended this man stated that his patient had shown symptoms of melancholy and resignation during his last sickness; it seems clear that the expectation of death must have lessened his chance of recovery.

771 954 828 [536] A prominent theme in Bella Coola folk-lore is the belief that a person cannot long survive who has made himself unpopular. It is sometimes stated that a magical means was employed to remove him, and this was no doubt often the case; a person who learns that a "medicine" had been employed to kill him is in no fit mental condition to counteract the power of suggestion, particularly if he knows that others are aware of what has been done. His death is regarded as proof of the efficacy of the means employed and the belief of others grows stronger. As already stated, this conviction still survives. When this ethnological investigation was being conducted, a [648] point under discussion was whether or not the Kimsquit people should be allowed to live in Bella Coola. One chief took the lead in objecting and everyone expected that, having thus roused the ire of would-be immigrants, he would die. He did so soon afterwards, and it is universally believed that it was caused by the concentration of the hostile thoughts of the Kimsquit. Similarly, the potency of taboos is increased by the fact that since [784] time immemorial the thoughts of everyone have been opposed to any infraction. Consequently, an offender is liable to punishment both for breaking an injunction and because he

U.S.N.M. Records, B.A.E. (1922–1954)/1948
NEA Bellacoola 1929

has gone contrary to something about which there has been universal agreement for generations.

To understand Bella Coola medicines it is, therefore, necessary to regard them as concepts deep rooted in tribal history, and made potent by the suggestibility of those who practice them. This can be most clearly illustrated with regard to those affecting death, but is equally true with regard to all medicines, whether curative or causative.

There remain for consideration the sociological aspects of medicines. Knowledge of most remedies has been handed down for generations as the property of ancestral families. Some are acquainted with one or two "cures," some with many, and some with none at all. The name of the discoverer of a particular medicine is usually lost in antiquity, though it is often attributed to someone described in the family's myth. Like other possessions based on mythology, a remedy of this type can be practised by any member of the group to which it belongs. If it is observed that a certain individual is using one of these successfully, others will ask him to apply it for them. Payment is always expected, but the sum varies enormously, depending upon the efficacy of the remedy, the difficulty of operation, the generosity of the person benefited, and so many diverse factors that no general conclusions can be made. A patient may observe the details of the treatment, but unless he is entitled to it, he would never dream of using it himself. This is due not only to honesty, but to the conviction that only a person with the inherited right to a certain cure can perform it successfully. Rarely, such knowledge is sold or given away outright, but, like other possessions of an ancestral family, this usually leads to friction and jealousy on the part of those overlooked. Some of the simple herbal remedies are common knowledge and are used by all, since remembrance of their ownership, if it ever existed, has been lost. At the present time it is difficult to learn details of proprietorship of some medicines, but these are indicated whenever possible.

"Please, may it be so it was when you held intercourse."

The basis of these medicines is their mountain goats and beaver meat in November when it is cold, and deer in October when it is rainy.

An old Kimsquit man mentioned that one winter he had been driven ashore by continuous cold winds and was on the verge of starving. He drew a bath and by using the medicine just described was able to bring rain with consequent lessening of wind so that he could continue his journey.

MISCELLANEOUS MEDICINES

To Destroy the Benefits of Another's Ceremonial Chastity

Place pieces of flesh from any recently skinned animal within a coffin from which the skeleton of an enemy has been removed, uttering at the same time the name of the person to be injured. This destroys the "chastity" acquired by the observance of ceremonial chastity.[1]

To Cause Insanity in a Woman

Catch a squirrel alive and tie one of the woman's hairs around its stomach; then release the animal. As it runs violently through the forest, sometimes head upwards, sometimes head downwards, so will the brain of the person whose hair it is carrying begin to churn violently till madness ensues.

To Cause Ferocity in Grizzly Bears

Throw the body of a recently killed muskrat against a man's back. The next grizzly bear he encounters will be ferocious, and may kill him. Knowledge of this medicine was learnt by noticing that a number of men who had been struck in play with muskrats, were killed by grizzly bears. The potency of the act has since been recognized.

To Cause Disease in a Malefactor

A number of years ago, when three Bella Coola were killed

[1] This medicine was learnt from a rather unsatisfactory informant and was not confirmed by others.

in a skirmish by the Carrier, one of their women mutilated a body by poking out the eye. The corpses were rescued and a Bella Coola with secret knowledge dropped into the eye sockets some potent medicine. As the corpses rotted, the murderers began to suffer pains, and the woman who had poked out the eyes lost her sight. As a blind, old woman, she had been seen by several men with whom the matter was discussed.

To Cause the Death of a Murderer (three means)

(1) Two women were murdered at Kimsquit in 1915. Before they were buried, an elderly Bella Coola put a secret medicine on the back of the neck of each so that the murderer would die from a disease located there. Within eight months, a Rivers Inlet man succumbed to a deep sore at the back of the neck, and it was assumed that he must have visited Kimsquit women and perpetrated the double murder.

Medicines like this and the preceding are widely known, but it is sorcerers who specialize in using them.

(2) When a man dies suddenly and murder is suspected, although the perpetrator is unknown, place the corpse within an old, hollow spruce log. As it rots, needles and dirt enter the flesh and at the same time the body of the murderer becomes leprous and full of sores. This method was employed during the lifetime of an informant and caused the death of the suspected murderer, whose guilt was thereby accepted as proved.

(3) Bury the victim's body with a toad in its mouth and the murderer will soon die.[4]

To Kill

Lift a corpse from the ground and point it at one or more individuals. This causes their death in the near future.

[4] This information was obtained from one informant only; details were unavailable, and confirmation from others could not be secured.

755 of water in which had been boiled eight splinters from a coffin. She would have obtained two from each side, and two from each end, in each case inserting the point of a crooked knife to pry loose a fragment of the wood, and then pulling it off in the same direction as the sun travels. It would have been immaterial from which aspect the first had been taken, but Y would have been careful to move around the coffin from east to south to west to north, corresponding to the course of the sun.

It is believed that no one has now the ability to use this cure.

Sorcerers

754 [424] Among the causative medicines of which knowledge has been handed down in various families for generations are secret means of killing. Every sorcerer must have such a possession, but he is not an hereditary unless he begins to exercise his powers for anti-social purposes. For example, if it be known that a [575] certain individual is able to cause death, the members of the *kusiut* society are eager to admit him to their group, so that his ability will be at their disposal to punish anyone who breaks their regulations. Likewise, if a chief decides that a certain [422] man should die, the power of his thoughts may suffice to cause the death, but the desired end will be effected more certainly by requesting aid from the owner of a means of killing. Such [756] an individual is frequently a shaman who is only too glad of an opportunity to exhibit his powers. The following methods of execution are said to have been employed socially, that is, with the connivance or at the request of chiefs or the members of the *kusiut* society:

(1) The executioner scratches for four successive nights on the door of the victim's house. If the latter suspects what is to take place, he may endeavour to escape by remaining awake which renders the scratching powerless. It is said that no one has been able to remain sleepless for more than three nights which gives the killer his opportunity.

U.S.D.A. Forest Service R-9 (1962-1974) 1969
BIA Bulletin 1974

(c) The contortionist obtains the left, bottom rib from a man's skeleton, puts one end in the fire until it is alight, and keeps it smouldering by continuous puffing. When he knows that his victim is asleep, he knocks with the bone on the outside of his house and the sleeper dies immediately.

(3) The contortionist holds a dried human hand before his victim's face, or knocks with it on his door, and he falls dead.

Individuals who have such knowledge are regarded with fear and a certain amount of respect, but it is recognized that they have every right to use their inherited abilities when requested to do so. A similar medicine was tried recently with fatal results:

A few years ago a number of Bella Coola, travelling to the interior along a trail over which some Carriers had just passed, noticed a place where one of the latter had been picking Indian rhubarb and had spit out the fibres after chewing. One of the party decided to test a medicine which had been handed down in his family for a long time. Catching a coal, he threw some of the shreds down its throat, tied a loop of the fibre around its neck, and left the animal suspended to die of strangulation or starvation as the case might be. That night the Bella Coola overtook the carriers who had camped early owing to the illness of one of their party. He was lying on the ground, too sick to move, and complaining of a choking sensation in his throat. Realizing the seriousness of the case, the man who had fastened up the coal hurried back to release it, but found it dead. Before he regained his companions, the Carrier had likewise choked to death. The efficacy of the medicine was thus proved.

Another man stated that a similar means of killing was to use in the same way fibres left exposed from bark which had been stripped for eating. There are believed to be many secret means of killing which, since they have often been employed indiscriminately, are thought to have had an appreciable effect in reducing the numbers of the Bella Coola.

The most common method of execution is by obtaining something belonging to the victim, and subjecting it to the fate desired for its owner. A few years ago, for example, the members of the *Axaist* society wanted to frighten one of their

[154] murderer, and delegated the task to a man who was known to be skilled in such matters. The latter stole some shreds of the offender's clothing, placed them in a human skull which he fastened to a long rope and drove into a swift stretch of the river. As the rapids tossed the skull to and fro, the person whose clothing was within began to feel uneasy; first he experienced a jumping pain in his head, but as the wild movements continued, he became light-headed and finally delirious. At this juncture, it was decided to pull back the skull, but the rope broke and it was carried away downstream. Nothing could save the man and he died within a few hours. This particular incident occurred among the Bella Bella, but it is agreed that it might have happened in Bella Coola.

[154] The mingled fear of, and aversion to, a person who knows some such secret method of killing, fades into insignificance compared to the extreme loathing of every Bella Coola for sorcerers. Their methods of killing *may* be similar to the one just described, but they are evil creatures who practise secretly, working entirely to gratify their own personal desires. Not only is the murder of a sorcerer a virtuous act, but the relatives of one should be put to death without mercy. There is no single factor which has caused so much hatred, bitterness, and suspicion as belief in the activities of sorcerers. Conversion to Christianity has scarcely altered it, and men who have been members of the church for ten to twenty years remain fully convinced that some of their associates have loathsome abilities as sorcerers. In many parts of the world, belief in black magic and witchcraft is one of the last native convictions to pass away, and it seems probable that this will be the case in Bella Coola although, of course, it will become increasingly difficult to obtain information about the subject.

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The actual methods used by different sorcerers vary, although most of them require an article which has been in contact with their intended victim. Consequently, they seek pieces of soiled clothing, nail parings, hair clippings, spittle, and other objects of the same type which are usually concealed

by their owners for safety. Justin, an old Bulla Cocle believed to be a sorcerer, has been seen to scrape up the moist earth where a man has urinated; in former times anyone doing such a suspicious act would have been killed. The article obtained is hidden and kept for future use, and if the practitioner wishes to inflict pain or death, he places it in contact with some potent medicine. Human bones are frequently employed for this purpose, although the most powerful is said to be grease obtained by boiling flesh cut from the inner side of the thigh of a recently buried corpse. To obtain either of these, graves must be robbed, another reason for hating sorcerers.

Secrecy is essential, as a sorcerer is usually noticed by his children, and in this way he has a better chance of obtaining articles belonging to different people without arousing suspicion. The necessary knowledge can accordingly be transmitted from generation to generation, sometimes without the slightest inkling of it becoming known. Even if a man is found out, he may be able to bribe his discoverer to silence.

Sometimes two from different tribes work in partnership to lessen the danger of practising their rites near the village of a victim. For example, a Bulla Cocle sorcerer may send an article to an accomplice in Bulla Bulla for placing in contact with strong medicine; this causes the victim to languish and die while the person responsible continues his usual routine of life around the village, suspected by no one. The commencement of such a partnership is a matter of great difficulty, since anyone who admits his crimes places himself in the power of his confidant. Sometimes, however, rumours that a certain individual is practising malevolent magic reach a foreign sorcerer who needs an accomplice. If he considers that the information is authentic, he may admit his own powers and suggest that they work together. Such an arrangement is profitable to both parties, and a partnership so formed may continue for generations.

Sorcerers display considerable ingenuity in arranging that their skill shall bring them pecuniary benefits as well as the

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gratification of killing their enemies. To achieve this end, a member of the family claims to be a shaman and his relatives loudly acclaim him. It is not difficult for a man with skill in conjuring to perform some simple deception, probably one carried out by an ancient shaman, which he announces has been shown to him by a supernatural being who has given him power to cure the sick. Then the sorcerer selects a suitable victim and causes him to become ill by placing something taken from him in contact with his medicine. If the malefactor is fortunate, the victim will consult the "shaman" who will effect a cure and be paid for it, ignorant of the fact that his recovery has been due to the removal of the article by the practitioner's accomplice. This deception is especially difficult to expose if the sorcerer has a less convincing groups to withhold from human bodies, since the sickness increases or diminishes accordingly to the depth to which the article is sunk. This is one of the ways in which some shamans have built up great reputations as curers.

The psychology of sorcery is similar to that of other kinds of magic. It is not possible for the malefactor to tell his victim that he has stolen a soul giving, for example, and that he will die because it has been placed in a decoction of human grease. But if the attending shaman is an accomplice, he can inform the sufferer that his malady has been caused by a sorcerer and this belief profoundly affects him. He feels that he will die unless a remedy be found, and if the shaman assures him that he has rendered the evil influence impotent, his chances of recovery are increased accordingly. So, likewise, the members of families who possess remedies against the activities of sorcerers often work in conjunction with one. It is therefore not surprising that the Bella Coola should firmly believe in their machinations and affirm that they have killed many thousands of people in the course of generations. The belief in magic would itself be sufficient to explain this, but it is strengthened by the social and economic aspects of a sorcerer's vocation. The container in which the potent mixture is kept

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is spoken of in the Chinook jargon as a *mesachie kun*, that is, a "dirty," "unclean," or "repulsive" kun, and this term is one which is mentioned whenever an unexpected death takes place, or whenever a coastal Indian is accused of loitering around a deserted camp or of stealing into another's house. The belief is not limited to the Bella Coola, but has formed the basis for criminal cases all over the coast of British Columbia. It is difficult to find words sufficiently strong to express the disgust, loathing, and fear with which the Bella Coola regard a person suspected of sorcery.

Ability in this respect carries with it certain prohibitions. A sorcerer would lose his power if he should wash or blow his nose except when about to commit murder. The one old Bella Coola now thought to be a sorcerer never washes; he knows that if he did so, he would be immediately accused of plotting someone's death. This man is greatly feared, as he is said to have a collection of spittle from every member of the tribe; efforts have been made to break into his house and steal this, but it has never been found. He takes credit for the death of at least one white man in the valley. A peculiar impediment suffered by all sorcerers is a prohibition against turning around, although no one knows why doing so should deprive them of their strength. The explanation may be that their power would recoil upon themselves, a concept well illustrated by the following incident:

When the first Christian Bella Coola left the old village to settle near the mission station, they were regarded with dislike and suspicion by their fellow-tribesmen. One day, one of them happened to follow a path through the woods which led her to a rude shelter in which was a bundle. Hastily summoning her fellows, they opened it and found an article of clothing belonging to each Christian. The man who told this incident described his fear at finding a dirty shirt of his own among the others. They felt that the garments had been collected by a young man who claimed to be a shaman, but whom they suspected to be merely the accomplice of a sorcerer, and this was soon proved to be the case. He was insufficiently trained; instead of touching the patient's body with his stick, he used to suck wherever the pain was located and then

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754 drink water. This washed the sickness down into his own stomach, which acted away so that he died. Recovery of their clothes saved the Christians from injury on this occasion.

Although the Bella Coola suspect that several of their tribesmen are sorcerers, their work is so carefully concealed that it is naturally difficult to obtain evidence against them. A few years ago, however, the two daughters of a *Tälʼis* man were searching for a calf lost by their father when they found a coal-oil can half hidden in a bush near the pasture fence. They peered into it, and were shocked to find a decayed human leg. They hurried home to their father, who investigated and found that it was the portion from knee to ankle, and that it was partly covered by a sock made for himself by his wife. This so terrified him that he took the find to the Indian Agent, who is believed still to have it. The finder was convinced that the deaths of several of his children must have been caused by earlier activities of the same, or another sorcerer. He suspected another *Tälʼis* man who had cleared a small farm in the vicinity, and who asked the two girls whether they had found a jam-tin near the place where the leg had been discovered.

The Bella Coola agree that sorcerers were more powerful in early times than at present, and recount a number of stories describing their activities. The following examples require no further explanation and clearly illustrate their beliefs.

A BELLA BELLA SORCERER

539 754 Not many years ago, as a Bella Bella lad lay dozing, he saw a man approaching him with a stick to one end of which was fastened a tuft of undyed cedar-bark. He quickly realized that it must be a sorcerer who had come to collect some of his exhaled breath as a personal possession, so he pretended to be asleep. The villain came nearer, held the sponge-like bark before the sleeper's face for a moment, and then stole away. He did not know that his intended victim was following him. The sorcerer entered his house, cautiously drew out a human leg bone and tied the tuft of bark to it; then, wearied by the strain, he went to sleep. This was the victim's opportunity. He crept into the house, took another piece of bark, held it before the sleeper's face, removed the one stained

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with his own breath, and rubbed it with dust containing the sorcerer's.

Before dawn the next morning, the sorcerer, ignorant of the substitution, took the bone and left the house. The youth had been watching and followed him to the edge of the sea, where he hid his bundle in a hole in the rocks through which the rising tide was sending up a miniature water-spout. The sorcerer went away at once, giving the lad an opportunity to remove the bone and secure it to another cavity. He knew that the wicked man would soon become ill and would suspect that someone had conquered with the bone. So it proved. As the water whirled the bark containing his exhaled breath, the sorcerer began to feel light-headed and rushed off to the hole in the rocks. Meanwhile the wounded victim had commenced his neighbours to watch what might transpire. The man searched frantically, but of course could not find the bone, so, as the water rose and covered the bark, he was impelled to plunge repeatedly beneath the surge, until he was drowned.

THE OUTWITTING OF A SORCERER

Over one hundred years ago there was living in Ononge as a powerful chief who owned a saltern-weir. Though an expert fisherman himself, he relied to a great extent on the assistance of a commoner who was still more efficient. One summer this man died suddenly. Immediately after the funeral, the chief commenced his trap, removed the fish, and returned home, physically weary from his labour and more than ever regretting the loss of his assistant. For some reason he could not sleep, so, after tossing for an hour or more, he decided to gather firewood. There was a late-rising full moon, so he had no difficulty in seeing his road as he climbed the small mountain behind the village, carrying only an iron axe. He had cut a bundle and was ready to return when he heard a groaning sound as though someone with a heavy burden were climbing the slope. Peering down his head, he hid himself in such a position that clear moonlight shone upon the path. After waiting a few minutes, he saw a figure approaching; it was Onqwat, a local shaman, carrying a coffin upon his back. Now thoroughly suspicious, the chief decided to follow, trusting to his axe for protection.

Onqwat passed over the crest, descended the other side, and then ascended the slope of the mountain on the east, in long tangents to hide his course. The chief had no difficulty in following him unobserved, and finally watched his unsuspecting guide put down the coffin and clear away the brush-wood. He seemed to be lifting something, which was followed by a grating sound as if a large stone was being dragged across another; then he disappeared from sight and the chief realized that Onqwat had

descended into an underground house of which the combination door and smoke-vent had been covered with stones and small sticks.

The chief crawled to the entrance and looked within. Round the walls were seated the corpses of all those who had died recently in the village, and Onqwnd was removing the body of the expert fisherman from its coffin. He put it in line with the others and put on a dance-apron decorated with human fingers and toe nails. Then he began to dance, at the same time pressing the lever of a mechanical contrivance which caused the corpses to beat time with sticks and even to leap into the air as energetically as do living singers. It was most weird and uncanny, but after watching for a few minutes, the chief was forced to cough. Although this was the first intimation to Onqwnd that he was being observed, he betrayed no surprise and invited the cougher to come down the ladder into his house. The chief did so, and he was received in a courteous and hospitable manner by his host who frankly admitted that he was a sorcerer, and added that his corpses were just dancing to welcome the new arrival.[9] He showed his guest everything of interest in the dwelling, including a box containing potent medicine in which was laid the skin of a man's left hand. He explained that he frequently took this to the village and, if he desired to kill anyone, would place within the palm a wisp of cedar-bark on which his victim had breathed, then close the fingers upon it. This caused death almost instantly. The chief, though heavily [illegible], never relaxed his vigilance for a moment, knowing that the sorcerer would not have been so communicative unless he had felt confident of his ability to kill his hearer. Towards morning, Onqwnd suggested that they return home, picked up the skinned hand, and was the first to climb the ladder, intending to stun the chief when his head appeared over the surface. His pursuer followed close at his heels and finally, at the top of the ladder, butted the sorcerer with his head so that he sprawled on the ground and the chief was able to emerge with safety. Unperturbed by this first failure, Onqwnd covered the entrance to his house so carefully that a man might have passed over it without suspecting its presence. The sorcerer wanted the chief to precede him homewards, but the latter was too cautious for any such subterfuge and insisted upon following close at the heels of the malefactor. They did not separate until they reached the village, where each proceeded to his own house.

Although this account is supposed to be a historical record of a comparatively recent incident, items of a supernatural type have obviously been added. The man who told the story did not seem to realize the difficulty of a mechanical contrivance to make corpses beat time, nor did it strike him that the dance of welcome must have been adapted from the similar ceremony performed by ghosts. The whole story was related as an unusual one but not of a supernatural nature.

The chief knew that his life was in serious danger although he had seen the first sound. Consequently, instead of lying down to sleep, he spread himself with his arms stretched out before him on a log and his head supported on them so that he could watch through his fingers. As he suspected, Ongaud soon came crawling in, holding a roll of undried snake-bark. He made no movement, even when the sorcerer held the before his face and stole away with it when it had been breathed upon. The brave man knew that his life would be in constant danger unless he could outwit his enemy and that this was his opportunity. He waited for about one hour, then quietly entered Ongaud's house where the sorcerer was sleeping peacefully, thinking that all danger was over, and the head-skin was lying in plain sight on a box. The chief carefully took a roll of snake-bark, held it before the sleeper's nose till it was impregnated with his breath, and then placed it within the skin from which he withdrew the piece already there. Having accomplished his purpose, he returned home without disturbing the sleeper.

The chief knew that Ongaud would wash the following morning if he intended to kill, so he remained awake and was watching the sorcerer's house before daybreak. As he suspected, the malefactor presently appeared, carrying his chamber-vessel, and went to the river. First he smeared himself with urine and walked in up to his knees, remained for a few minutes, and came ashore again. The second time, he waded in until the water was up to his thighs; the third time, he went in till it was shoulder-deep. Sorcerers always wash in this way in order that the last parts of the body shall be covered successively, although no one knows why this should be done by them alone. The hidden chief knew that Ongaud would most disaster when he bathed for the fourth time once the skin, carried beneath his arm-pit, would then be beneath the surface for a few moments. So it transpired. He dipped his head, but instead of being able to raise it, his first found above the surface, and he remained in that position, slowly drowning. This was the fate which he had destined for the chief whose breath he had placed within his skinned hand, but he was unaware of the substitution which, of course, re-acted upon himself.

The watcher hastily roused his neighbours who came running to the back hall-shed and rubbing their eyes. They brought ashore the corpse of the drowned man while the chief recounted all that he had seen and done during the night. As soon as it was sufficiently light a number of men accompanied him to the underground house in the mountains from which the bodies were brought back and reburied by their relatives. Previous to this time, no one had suspected Ongaud of sorcery, but as soon as the discovery was made, the angry people slew all his relatives

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except an infant daughter. She grew up, married, and was the mother of the old Bella Coola, about seventy years of age in 1923, who is so lionized as a sorcerer. It is he who has the collection of spirits, and it is believed that, like his grandfather, he is the owner of a skinned and stuffed left hand with which he can kill a man as surely as with a rifle.

THE DISCOVERY OF TWO SORCERERS

Many years ago there lived at *Stuie* two young men who were constant companions; they always hunted and travelled together, and were determined to share each other's fortune, no matter what it might be. One day they agreed to go up the valley to visit some friends, but decided to postpone their departure until dusk. One of the two went out for a short walk and failed to return by the time appointed; his comrade sought him everywhere and finally hurried off up the trail, thinking that his friend must have started before him. He soon heard sounds of laboured breathing as if people were carrying a heavy burden, and could just distinguish two men carrying a coffin on poles between them. He realized that they must be sorcerers and that their inability to turn around would give him an advantage. Stealing up behind them, he pushed the rear man, not only causing him to stumble, but the one in front as well, since their burden was resting between them. Neither could turn around to see who had discovered them, and they became more and more terrified as the brave youth first pushed, and then pulled the one in the rear. [774] Suddenly he called out, *wa*, so loudly in their ears that the sudden start expelled their spirits and they fell to earth as if dead. The lad watched their gradual recovery, feeling confident that his partner must be within ear-shot and would come hurrying back to his assistance if necessary. As soon as the sorcerers had revived, one of them said angrily to the boy:

"You will die presently."

"No," he answered. "It is you who are in grave peril."

At this point he called loudly for his companion who was so far ahead that he could barely hear the other's voice; he answered the shout and began to run back. The sorcerers, trying to make the best of a bad situation, mocked him by advising him to call again and to bring more helpers if he wanted to escape death. When his friend had come so close that he could see what was taking place, the youth called out to him:

"Partner! They say that I am in danger."

"No," the other answered. "It is they who will die."

When he joined the group the four began to discuss what was to be done. The sorcerers begged their discoverers not to expose their mis-

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doings, and offered to make them members of the *Tsetsut* society to ensure their silence. Though uninitiated persons, even this tempting bribe was refused by the two youths. Next, each of the malefactors offered a daughter as wife to each of the partners, and they accepted this bargain. For their part, the sorcerers were glad to escape at any cost, since they had been caught red-handed; they knew that henceforth they would have to assist their captors, but this was preferable to exposure.

The two groups parted company; the boys continued their journey to the upper village and the sorcerers went on their way to some cave in the mountains. Within a few weeks, each youth married the daughter of one of the malefactors, with whose assistance they were able to give potlatches and become influential personages.

A FAMILY OF KWATNA SORCERERS

Near the village of Kwatna there used to be two cemeteries. One was on a small point of ground at the mouth of the river which became an island at high tide; here were interred the bodies of chiefs alone, a custom said to be without parallel on the coast. It is not known why there should have been this special burial-ground, but the place was always spoken of as "The Chiefs' Island." Instead of being buried, coffins containing commoners were laid on ledges of rock at the base of a cliff behind the village; this custom, though unusual, is known elsewhere on the coast, at Kimsquit and Port Simpson, for example.

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Many generations ago, there was a time when the corpses of commoners frequently disappeared from the ledges on which they had been placed, and although it was believed that a sorcerer was responsible, no one knew whom to blame. One old woman had lost nearly all her numerous relatives when she realized that, though there had been many deaths in the village and some families had been almost wiped out, no members of one group had been taken. This roused her suspicions; she soon noticed that whenever anyone was sick, four brothers of the family in question always made some plausible excuse to leave the village and proceed up the other arm of the inlet. She concluded that this could be no mere coincidence, the four must be sorcerers. Within a short while, another of her relatives fell ill and died in spite of all that could be done; this reduced her family to herself and her infant. On the day after the funeral, the four brothers said that they wanted to gather hemlock boughs and set off in a canoe up the other arm of the inlet for the purpose. They did not come back at night and the villagers assumed that they had been delayed and had camped. The bereaved woman, however, who had hidden herself below the village, saw the brothers paddle back around the

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point and conceal their canoe beneath a bushy tree instead of landing at the village. More suspicious than ever, she followed the four and was able to keep in touch with them in spite of the necessity of carrying her baby. They went to the cemetery, placed the coffin on poles, and two of them carried it away with the others in close attendance.

The mother, still clutching her child, followed the brothers up the side of a steep mountain behind Kwatna. They avoided all trails and travelled in zigzags until they reached the base of a precipice where a tall tree was growing. The mother, who was not far behind, could see that its upper branches grew across to touch the cliff at a point where the mouth of a cave was visible. The coffin was placed on the ground, three of the brothers climbed the tree, and passed from it into the opening in the rock. From this they shoved out a plank to form a narrow bridge to the upper trunk, and dropped a long rope which the one below fastened around the coffin; then it was hauled up, the fourth brother climbed the tree and all disappeared from sight. The woman continued to remain in hiding, but before long her curiosity was piqued by seeing smoke drift out from the opening. She decided that she must see what was taking place, so she nursed her infant to keep it quiet, and then began the ascent. Without difficulty she reached a point from which she could peer within, and saw the four melting down the grease from the dismembered body of her kinsman. They were sorcerers without doubt, and she noted that they were preserving with care all the fat that exuded from the inside of the thighs. Each was wearing a mask, but she was able to recognize them by their figures.

When the poisonous decoction had been prepared, the sorcerers fell asleep, still wearing their masks. Made bold by her longing for revenge, the woman crept across the plank without disturbing the sleepers. Cautiously she picked up the spoon which they had used for stirring the mixture, lifted a few drops in it and held it to the mouth of the one whom she recognized as the oldest brother. He did not stir. With a quick, firm pressure she stamped upon his stomach, causing him to wake and swallow with a gasp; the poison was so potent that he died without making a sound. She took another spoonful of the brew and gave it to the second sorcerer in the same way and with the same result, and in this way killed all four. Stopping only to fill a receptacle with the brew, the woman climbed down the tree and hurried back to Kwatna.

Instead of describing what she had seen and done, the woman determined to wipe out the relatives of the sorcerers. So she invited the whole village to a feast, allotting the proper place to each family. This whole procedure was unusual because she had killed no large game, but there is always a good deal of latitude allowed in such matters, particularly as

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everyone sympathized with the hostess on account of her many bereavements. Her only assistant was a woman who, like herself, had lost all her kinsmen. The food provided was hemlock-bark dipped in fish-oil, but the hostess contrived that every relative of the sorcerers should receive a portion dipped in poison instead. They all started to eat at the same time, and all fell dead simultaneously without a word.

Instantly wild confusion broke out and the guests exclaimed that they were being served poison. Unperturbed, the woman explained everything; how she had first become suspicious, how she had followed the four brothers, and all that had resulted. A party set out at once under her guidance and found that everything she had said was true. In this way perished all the relatives of the sorcerers except one man who happened to be absent at the time. One of his descendants is now living in Bella Coola and is regarded with a certain amount of suspicion, although there is no evidence that he or any of his relatives have practised sorcery for generations.

A BELLA COOLA SORCERER

Since the introduction of muskets, there dwelt in the lower Bella Coola valley a shaman, *Awaxaikaiaxaix-ăk* by name; he was a regular practitioner, able both to heal the sick or to cause death. When using his power beneficially, he shook a rattle containing a rock-crystal, but when he was requested to kill, he used one that appeared to be identical but contained human teeth and wolf fangs. In some unknown manner these were lost, which prevented him from slaying a man as requested by the chiefs of his village. One April day he mentioned his difficulty casually to a certain *Tcika* who surprised him by replying:

"I can supply you with teeth and you will have greater power than ever."

The two were alone at the time and *Tcika*, having admitted that he was a sorcerer, suggested that they form a partnership. He must have felt confident that *Awaxaikaiaxaix-ăk* would agree, as indeed he did gladly. *Tcika* explained that the necessary knowledge had been handed down in his family for generations, but that he had only recently begun to use it to avenge a slight at a feast of seals.

Next morning *Tcika* guided *Awaxaikaiaxaix-ăk* up the mountain on the north side of the extreme head of North Bentinck Arm, just west of the Nechestaconnay River. Hunters frequently ranged over this area, but no one had ever seen a sorcerer's box there. *Tcika* led the way to a small rock shelter beneath which was concealed a chest about eight feet long. He kicked it four times with his left foot, and called out four times:

"Wake up!"

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Triks then raised the cover, and his companion saw that it contained a number of separate compartments, formed by vertical strips criss-crossing within, and that the whole bottom was covered with a thick, black, oily liquid. On top of the cube-like divisions lay a badly decomposed corpse which *Awaxaitxaixaix-dis* recognized as that of a youth who had disappeared from the village the previous July and who was thought to have been drowned. *Triks* explained the mechanism of the box: Each section was for a different disease, stomach trouble in one, heart failure in another, consumption in a third, sudden death in a fourth, and so on. Whenever he wanted to cause a specific disease, he would dip a personal possession of the victim's in the oil at the bottom of the proper compartment and leave it there. All that was then necessary to improve the patient's condition was to raise the article slightly in the liquid, whereas to lower it increased the force of the malady, and to leave it covered entirely caused death. It was generally known that such methods were used by sorcerers, but this was the first box that *Awaxaitxaixaix-dis* had ever seen and he was keenly interested. He inquired the purpose of the boy's body, and *Triks* replied that he had killed him with the intention of taking his skin to use against the lad's relatives, but had been forced to carry away the whole body owing to the difficulty of removing the skin alone. Whenever he wanted to kill a person quietly and rapidly, it was only necessary to lay an article which had belonged to the victim on the back of the neck of the corpse. Death resulted immediately, since this was the spot where the spirit had resided during life. After answering his friend's questions, *Triks* fumbled around in the bottom of the box and drew forth a number of wolf teeth which he gave to the grateful *Awaxaitxaixaix-dis*. Then the two went home to their respective villages, after promising each other mutual support and secrecy.

Although the two malefactors took every precaution not to be seen together too often, rumours began to circulate that they were partners, and that *Triks* was a sorcerer. There was no proof of this, but the suspected man became so unpopular that he was virtually expelled from his village. More angry than perturbed at this, he moved three miles up the valley to the town in which *Awaxaitxaixaix-dis* was living. After waiting for a few weeks to allay suspicion, *Triks* determined to murder the chief who had been the prime mover in his expulsion, and sent his son to steal the victim's chamber-pot. His wife discovered the theft the same night and promptly roused the whole village, realizing the danger to her husband if it should fall into the hands of a sorcerer; diligent search was made, but of course the article could not be found, since the thief had taken it away to his new home. *Triks* placed the vessel

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in a compartment of his box containing a bear's bladder tied into sections; this caused his enemy to suffer stricture and soon to die in agony. 539 754

Following the usual custom, the relatives of the dead man smeared their faces with ashes which they left in position for a year. The widow, who had loved her husband very dearly, allowed this indication of mourning to remain even longer than the customary period. On several occasions *Tsike* made somewhat slighting remarks about her excessive grief, and when one of his sons also commented upon it, she became suspicious and told her relatives. One of them was a chief of the village where *Tsike* was then living and where he was already regarded with distrust. This man visited the home of his bereaved kinswoman and called the chiefs of her village together to discuss the matter, and to inform them of the suspicions which his conduct had aroused in his new home. Three days later, *Tsike* happened to come to the village and was at once summoned to the house where the chiefs had assembled to interrogate him. *Tsike* sat on a box in the centre of the group and denied, slowly and positively, that he had any knowledge of sorcery, adding that his poverty confirmed his statement. At this moment *Awaxaikaixaixais-dzi* came rushing into the house, furiously brandishing a rifle, and exclaiming that it was scandalous the way in which unjust accusations were being levelled at *Tsike*. One of the chiefs quietly slipped behind the shaman, knocked his fire-arm upwards so that it exploded harmlessly in the air, and threw him to the ground where he threatened him with a large knife.

"I will not brook any interference from you in this matter," he said.

This so frightened *Awaxaikaixaixais-dzi* that he blurted out that he knew *Tsike* was a sorcerer and that he had seen his box containing a decayed human body. *Tsike* was less excited than anyone else, and slipped out of the house in the confusion, merely pausing to ask:

"What are you going to do about it?"

He returned to his new village where, of course, the news soon followed of what had been discovered. The chiefs decided that he must be killed, and that the most convenient occasion would be at a feast of seals which was to take place in the near future. *Tsike* accepted an invitation to this and was slain while he was busy handling his spoon. One of his sons was killed with him, another who escaped through a hole in the floor was slaughtered near the village. His two brothers were absent on a hunting expedition, but a party tracked them and slew them in their camp before they knew that their evil deeds had been found out. *Tsike*'s two daughters were allowed to live, but were given to a famous warrior who kept them practically as prisoners. *Awaxaikaixaixais-dzi*, who seems to have escaped all punishment for his share in the affair, guided a party to the sorcerer's box. It was found to be old and moss-covered, obviously 539 754 539 754 539 754

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539 one used by some of *Tcika*'s ancestors. It was brought to the ocean and
754 thrown in.

Taboos

784 The Bella Coola regard as taboos those injunctions that are observed in the belief that their neglect would cause automatic punishment. The mechanism of enforcement is frequently not understood; it is enough to know that an unpleasant result would follow disobedience. Some taboos are in force at all times, others only during certain seasons of the year, and still others at critical periods of life. Since the psychology of such [789] beliefs is essentially magical rather than religious, they could justifiably be grouped at this point. Unfortunately, to do so would destroy the continuity of accounts of birth, adolescence, death, ceremonial chastity, and many other aspects of Bella Coola life subject to taboo. The injunctions enforced by the River Guardian, the restrictions observed by a girl after puberty, the continence required after different medicines, all are taboos, disregard of which brings certain punishment. These and many others have already been described in connection with the activities to which they pertain. It is doubtful whether the Bella Coola have a single word to describe taboos [783] in general, though they are all regarded as *sxaiāx*, that is, as something which is ceremonially unclean.

Scarcely to be distinguished from taboos are ceremonial errors, *yen·imut* or *kān·imut*. Failure to give presents to heralds when a seat breaks beneath a chief or a dancer stumbles, or unnecessary activity during the year's waiting for the fruition of supernatural good fortune are ritual mistakes of this type. Neglect of such regulations brings punishment, though of a lesser kind than the breaking of taboos. If the [688] error has been in connection with a ceremony, the offence can [203] be wiped out by presents to heralds, and the terms *yen·imut* and *kān·imut* are likewise applied to some of their prerogatives such as the ability to claim clothing during the marriage of a chief's child.

Most taboos and errors can best be described with other

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Frequently the marshals and associated *kukusiut* depute others to act as their executioners. Sometimes a shaman who is also a *kusiut* is asked to slay the offender, or a *kusiut* in whose ancestral family a knowledge of means for secret murder has been handed down for generations may be called upon. The executioner is told that if he fails he will himself be killed. Although no Bella Coola would admit that a person so charged had committed murder by other than magical means, it appears highly probable that such was the case. It is believed that long ago the *kukusiut* were able to kill an offending uninitiated person by drawing forth his spirit, wrapping it in undyed cedar-bark and casting it into the fire. The victim would die within a short time.

The desire to carry out *kusiut* ceremonials with proper dignity and ritual not only acts as a strong bond of union among members of the society in a single village, but between those in different towns and even in different tribes. When a marshal has struck a *kusiut*, the ceremony, whatever it may be, is at once stopped. Two *kukusiut* are sent off to bear the tidings to the nearest village up the valley, and two more to the one below. The messengers go beneath the house in which a dance is taking place and knock on the floor of the back-room. Someone presently hears them and a *kusiut* goes out to investigate. When the envoys have told their tale he returns, whispers to the singers, and the ceremony concludes for that night. As soon as the uninitiated, if any are present, have been ejected, the messengers enter with blankets almost covering their faces and seat themselves between the fire and the back-room where the senior members crowd around to listen. From this village two more *kukusiut* are despatched with the news which is thus transmitted with remarkable speed from end to end of the valley. When next the marshals are admonishing the *kukusiut* of their respective villages, they do not fail to draw attention to the way in which the law has been upheld. Conversely, if a marshal hears indirectly that there has been a flaw in the ritual of a neighbouring village,

2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

spit upon his own hands and rubbed them over the patient's head, his arms, his trunk, his legs, and finally his feet, as if massaging him. *Xnutli*'s strength began to return at the first touch of Thunder's hands, and, when the treatment was finished, he felt entirely rejuvenated. Thunder told him to overtake his friends and to massage them in the same way and they would be revived. He explained that they had been travelling in circles of ever-decreasing radius which was the reason that they had neither reached their destination nor recrossed their own tracks. He added that they must think constantly of their first objective, Ulkatcho, *Nuk̓ítco* in the Bella Coola language, and that at night *Xnutli* must sleep on the side of the five nearest that goal.

Soon afterwards the four wanderers were surprised to see a stalwart man swinging along the trail behind them, and their amazement was intense when they realized that it was *Xnutli* whom they had left at the point of death. He bade three of his comrades hide, and massaged the fourth as Thunder had done to him; this restored his strength exactly as in his own case. The one so cured then concealed himself, while *Xnutli* treated another of his comrades, and finally the third and fourth. This was not the end of the assistance so obtained. Within a few minutes of their recovery, they found the trail they had so long been seeking and reached Ulkatcho before night, though under normal circumstances the same distance would have required four days of travel. There were several Bella Coola at the settlement who were overjoyed at the safety of those for whom all hope had long been abandoned. They rested for four days, then set out for home. *Xnutli* told his comrades to fix their minds upon their objective, and as a result they were able to make the journey with phenemonal rapidity.

Thunder had granted *Xnutli* the boon of *ɬx̣ɔ̓kwaladjut* on this occasion, and had promised that he would come to his help whenever called upon. *Xnutli* was a sorcerer, a profession which had been practised for generations in his family, and he now performed more openly than ever, assured that Thunder would be able to protect him. The malefactor killed more and more people, until he became an object of universal hatred and fear. At last the principal chief of the village, confident in the power which the giving of many potlatches had bestowed upon him, ordered an expert shot to slay *Xnutli*. The man so deputed had himself lost several relatives and gladly watched an opportunity. This came when the sorcerer was paddling across the Bella Coola near the old Hudson's Bay Company's post; he took careful aim from ambush, fired, and the evil man fell dead. A medicine can be made from the corpse of a murdered person, which, when used by the relatives, causes the killer's death. To prevent this, the executioner called his friends and they took

2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6
Tsimshian NE15

754 the body to his own house, pregaratory to burying it. It was April, but
[776] as they were waiting, a violent thunderstorm blew up from the east, the only time that such had ever occurred at that season. Thunder had promised to come to *Xnatli*'s aid, but the latter had died too suddenly to make any appeal; the supernatural one had just learnt of his protégé's death and had come rushing to his assistance. Realizing the
B [789] danger, the executioner and his friends hastily buried the corpse, throwing over it a number of blood-stained cloths, and finally stamping down the earth. There was a furious hurricane; trees were uprooted, houses shook, the earth over the grave seethed as if in a whirlpool and chunks of it
B [789] were carried up into the air. Only the potency of the blood on the cloths prevented the return to life of *Xnatli*.[1]

B T 648 [721] [726] [622] This second unsuccessful attack on the Kitkatla so disheartened the Bella Coola that they made no more raids on their northern foemen who, flushed with victory, became even bolder than before. As usual, the Kimsquit and *Tăl'io* people suffered more than the inhabitants of the main valley. On one of these forays, about 1855, the Kitkatla killed *Qoixwelisel*, a brother of *Potlas*, the leading chief of the Bella Coola at the time. This was contrary to all the rules of warfare since he was a member of one of the leading families and the donor of many potlatches, a man whose name was as well known as that of *Potlas*, *Nuăsputsum* of Fort Rupert, or *Tsibasa* himself. The fame of such chiefs was enough to protect them except during the actual heat of conflict, and the Bella Coola were justly angry.

B T 648 728 A few years later a single canoe came paddling up North Bentinck Arm and was beached about half a mile from the head. Scouts investigated, and returned to *Qomqo'ts* with news that the occupants were Kitkatla, and that *Tsibasa* himself was among them. At once there was heated discussion among the people of the lower valley. Many who had lost relatives in the protracted struggle wished to wipe out the party; others, to see what they wanted. A few daring individuals skulked through the forest and fired on the visitors at long range; they were
B T [726] answered, not with bullets, but by the four times holding aloft of a moose-skin, a sign of friendly intentions. If the strangers had fired on the scouts, a fight would have ensued, but this peaceful reception disarmed suspicion.

B [787]

[1] This tale is a curious illustration of the manner in which supernatural elements become woven into accounts which have an historical basis. It is to be assumed that the wanderers were in a suggestible state owing to privation, and readily believed that supernatural powers must have assisted them. *Xnatli* was feared as a sorcerer, and probably boasted of a visitation from Thunder during his wanderings. This was accepted and the incorporation of impossible incidents followed in due course.

2:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6
Carrier NE7

B C 648 726

the first time that two girls were missing. Then they set forth on the track of the Carriers. The raiders, knowing that their assault could not have been heard in any village, and unaware of the three young people hidden in the woods, took no precautions. The first night the pursuers reached the camp where the Carriers had built a long, narrow fire of some kind of wood which emitted no sparks, on either side of which they had placed a long tree-trunk on which to rest their feet as they dried their moccasins at the flames. One of the Bella Coola girls was placed near one end of the fire, the other at the other end on the opposite side. Neither could sleep, but kept watching silently in the hope of being able to escape. Towards dawn one of them was overjoyed to see a Bella Coola scout peering around a tree-trunk. He motioned her to keep silent and she nodded to show that she understood his signal; then he went away. He told his waiting companions how the Carriers were resting with their feet over logs beside the fire, and suggested that they prepare heavy clubs. Having done this, the Bella Coola stole up behind the drowsing enemy. Each selected a victim and broke his leg, or legs, with a crack of the club. Not one of the raiders escaped, the cripples being killed without difficulty. In some manner this event was made the theme of a *sisaok* song.

B C 648 721

The following unrelated incident is probably historically correct, in outline at least, since it is said to have taken place about 1860, and two of the participants were great-uncles of the man from whom the account was obtained.

One October a number of Carriers were staying at *Nuxalxt*. Their chief was a certain *Qimâlxem* who was distantly related to the people of that village, though he had long since ceased to be regarded as anything but a Carrier. The river was running full and though there were many cohoe and dog salmon in it, they were difficult to catch on account of the roaring torrent. A *Nuxalxt* man, *Qoixwulixtl*, had laid in an abundant store of fish for the winter, but his bad-tempered wife urged him to get her some fresh salmon and he ventured forth. A drifting log struck his canoe; he called out for help, but before it reached him, his craft capsized and he was drowned. *Qoixwulixtl* was a popular man and there was great grief at his untimely death.

B [556] 754

As was so often the case, jealousy was rife in *Nuxalxt*, where a certain *Nûsdîl* had become wealthy. He was a good carpenter, and his riches had been amassed as rewards for making *hasilut* masks, but of course such payments had been made in secret and many people wondered how he had acquired his fortune. This was enough to cause a certain amount of suspicion, and a rival determined to take advantage of it. This man approached *Qimâlxem* and said that he believed *Nûsdîl* was responsible

2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6
Carrier NE7

for Ɫɛ̀lwaɬɛ̀st's death, that he was sure the wealthy man was really a sorcerer, and had used some evil means to cause the fisherman's drowning. *Ɫɛ̀mɛ̀lxem* was distantly related to the dead man and, thus incited, determined to kill *Nänäɬ* in revenge. That evening, as he was lying playing with his grandchild, the Carrier chief entered his house and thrust a musket against the unsuspecting man's chest. *Nänäɬ* quickly knocked down the muzzle so that the bullet, instead of killing him, merely passed through the fleshy part of his hips. *Ɫɛ̀mɛ̀lxem* made no attempt to run away. In such cases it rests with the relatives of the injured man whether or not to take revenge, and they usually avoid beginning a vendetta unless virtually driven to it. News of the assault spread down the valley, and two of *Nänäɬ*'s nephews, *Ƭsɛ̀·kmai* and *Oɱikɩmɣ*, went up to investigate. They were both men of considerable influence in the community, both validated warriors who had taken prominent parts in the unsuccessful attack on Kitkatla a few years before. Realizing that their uncle was not seriously wounded, the two brothers carried him to their canoe, intending to take him home and to disregard the assault.

During this time, the evil *Nusɬalɬ* man had been working on *Ɫɛ̀mɛ̀lxem*'s fears by telling him that *Nänäɬ* was certain to kill him by magical means, until he decided that he could escape only by murdering the wounded man. His followers learnt of this and tried to dissuade him, fearing the presence of the two famous warriors. As their canoe was going downstream, it was caught in an eddy and tipped so that one musket and both cartridge boards were lost. This seemed to *Ɫɛ̀mɛ̀lxem* the chance for which he had been waiting: he fired from the bank and *Nänäɬ* fell dead, much to the consternation of his own followers as well as the *Nusɬalɬ* people.

If *Ƭsɛ̀·kmai* and *Oɱikɩmɣ* had been ordinary men they would probably have fled downstream but, being duly validated men of valour, this course never occurred to them.[14] *Oɱikɩmɣ*, who had one charge left in his musket, consulted his brother as to their course of action.

"*Nänäɬ* is dead," his brother replied. "It is probably time for us to die as well. You had better shoot."

Meanwhile *Ɫɛ̀mɛ̀lxem* had remained on the bank, laughing at the two warriors. *Oɱikɩmɣ* told him to be silent, then fired, instantly killing his uncle's murderer. The Carriers began to run to and fro on the shore, whence they could hear the two brothers talking to each other:

"Let us not think of escaping," said one. "We have displayed our characters today. If we are to die, let us die."

[14] The man from whom this account was obtained mentioned as a matter of course that confirmed warriors could never run away; when questioned further, he emphasized that the public validation of bravery made it utterly impossible for them to flee from danger.

2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6
Carrier NE7

The other agreed, so they paddled in and landed at the bottom of the village, heedless of the fact that it was full of Carriers. The *Nusḳalst* people seem to have remained passive, but the angry Carriers came rushing forth and *Oḳmikmȳ* spoke proudly to them:

"You would be dead as your chief if we had not lost our weapons."

The two brothers walked slowly up the long sidewalk of the village, while the Carriers skulked around, uttering threats, casting stones and shooting arrows. Some of the latter stuck in their backs, but long previously both *Tsā'kmai* and *Oḳmikmȳ* had eaten part of a *ssiuil* which had rendered their bodies impervious to such wounds. Arrived at the upper end of the village, they stopped and waited, making no attempt to defend themselves, until they were killed. At intervals throughout the day the Carriers treated the two bodies with ignominy, now thrusting spears into them, now beating them, and all this time not a single Bella Coola dared even to protest, so much were they filled with fear of the Carriers who, when roused as they then were, fight like mad dogs. In the late afternoon one of the women thrust a knife into the eyes of the fallen warriors. Even this insult did not rouse the *Nusḳalst* people themselves, but *Winās*, one of their slaves, felt called upon to take action. Before being captured, he had been a person of importance in his own home and the Bella Coola had allowed him to become a leading member of the *kusiut* society; in the course of time he had become entirely reconciled to his fate, and even thought as a Bella Coola which gave him the necessary assurance to address the Carriers.

"*Wa*, wa," he said. "See the breadth of the sky.[15] I have never seen, nor have I even heard of such a thing as you have done today. Truly you have wiped your feet on all that is sacred and powerful."

This speech for the first time brought the enormity of their offence home to the Carriers. The actual taking of life did not affright them, but in their excitement they had overlooked what was to *Winās* the most obvious sin: they had passed and repassed on the sidewalk outside a house where a *kusiut* dance was taking place. Thus reminded of the danger to which they had exposed themselves, the Carriers withdrew.

Next day the *Nusḳalst* people buried the four victims. *Q̄āmālxem* had been a mighty chief and, being distantly related, they would normally have given him an elaborate funeral, but now they acted as if dazed and unaware of his prowess. A man who owned a powerful medicine put some of it in the eyes of the two who had been mutilated by the Carrier woman; as the bodies began to decompose, those who had killed them began to suffer from eye-trouble, and the woman became blind. Believing that their sin had caused their misfortunes, the Carriers fled home.

[15] To call attention in this way to the breadth of the universe carries with it the implication that it will fall to crush those who have broken a sacred law.

3: Smith E-5 (1920-1923) 1925
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

SYMPATHETIC MAGIC AND WITCHCRAFT AMONG THE BELLACOOLA

By HARLAN I. SMITH

MANY OF the Bellacoola Indians today believe in sympathetic magic and witchcraft, after over a hundred years of contact with white men. Most of them live within hearing of the bells of the mission church, and the government school. Not a few of the men take logging contracts; some of them build and operate motor boats; many of them join the fishing fleets of the salmon canneries; most of the women work in the canneries; and all deal at the white men's stores.

The Bellacoola lived at the heads of the long inlets half way up the Pacific Coast of Canada and in the tributary Bella Coola valley. Now, numbering perhaps two hundred and fifty, they, with the exception of a few families, are concentrated on one reservation at the mouth of the Bella Coola river. The Bella Coola valley has been called the Norway of Canada. This was where Sir Alexander Mackenzie, the first white man to cross Canada overland, reached the sea.

Aboriginally, the Bellacoola were of the North Pacific Coast culture of America, which is characterized by the extensive use of red cedar and sea products, particularly salmon, the making of graceful, sea-going canoes, each hewn from a single cedar, the erection of large rectangular houses made of cedar planks, with carved house posts and totem poles, lack of pottery, and expertness in carpenter work, carving, and painting. This culture belongs to the barefoot area, but the Bellacoolas wore moccasins to a certain extent. The art of the area was that best known from the paintings and carvings of the totem poles, largely of conventionalized animal forms. The life centred around a very highly developed social organization, an extensive and powerful financial system, and property rights to names, rituals and honors. The Bellacoola language is one of the Salish linguistic stock. They

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are apparently more recent comers to the coast than their neighbors and have not fully adopted this coast culture.

The following examples of sympathetic magic and witchcraft, collected during 1920 to 1923 among the Bellacoola, illustrate the extent of their belief in this direction. 114 121

Most of this information was given me by the late Captain Schooner, born about 1848, and Joshua Moody, born about 1868, both apparently full-blood Bellacoola Indians. Neither of them spoke English and both gave me the data in Chinook jargon, which I have endeavored to interpret and arrange in logical order, but have tried to render in as nearly as possible the Indian mode of thought, feeling and expression. Schooner was a pagan gentleman. Joshua has great knowledge of plants and animals, and is a Bellacoola scientist, but his great ambition and jealousy, combined with his disloyalty in giving up his own people's customs and adopting a very thin veneer of Christianity, color his statements relating to beliefs, although his plant and animal data have always withstood cross examination and comparison with the data supplied by other Indians. Alec Davis and Mrs. Willie Mack told of the toad. They do not talk English and spoke to me in Chinook jargon. Only the accounts about the grizzly bear skin and the bracelet of beaver skin, which were given me by Mrs. Stoessiger, were told in English. 115 [191] [191]

The material was not given as accounts of magic or witchcraft, but rather as part of the data regarding the properties of plants and animals of which I was endeavoring to collect as complete information as possible. 114 121

Joshua, who is even younger than Captain Schooner, remembers the time when Mr. John Clayton was the only white man living in the Bella Coola valley, and when they saw only one other white man every year or two. Consequently these men remember the old Bellacoola beliefs before they were much, if at all, affected by European ideas. 114 115

It will be noticed that magic among the Bellacoola is considered of use both for beneficial and injurious purposes, and that the materials giving effect to it are of both plant and animal origin. 789 754

3: Smith E-5 (1920-1923) 1925
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754 The beneficial purposes include: making a child grow up to
789 be a good dancer, industrious, a swift berry picker, or a strong
856 man; curing lung trouble; making the river erode where wanted; and two ways of stopping rain. The injurious purposes include: two ways of making a person grow up to be a thief; the causing of craziness and quarrelsomeness and the three ways of causing death.

754 The materials and actions used include: ashes of aspen leaves;
789 a dead toad, used with hair, with a red cedar bark face wiper,
824 and with lost pieces of thimble berry shoots which were acciden-
825 tally dropped while being eaten; ashes of a yellow jacket's nest; a living raven with phlegm; beaver paws, in two instances; a skin bracelet from a beaver's foreleg; a dead wood-rat; a dead mouse; a grizzly bear's skin; a living red squirrel with a bit of apron fringe; setting fire to a wood-rat's house; and poking an ant hill.

789 To make a person a good dancer the ashes of the burned leaves
856 of the aspen or trembling poplar were said to be useful, but
824 Joshua said this may have been a joke. The Bellacoola Indians
535 say the leaves dance. They never say that they tremble. When a baby was born, if the parents talked about it and the father desired that the baby grow up to be a good dancer, the mother or father got the leaves, burned them and put the ashes on the baby's hands, knees and elbows. When telling of this Joshua held his hands with the finger tips up and moved them as the Bellacoola do in dancing. Both rich and poor men danced.

789 A baby girl would grow up to be industrious, it was believed,
825 if the warm limbs of a recently dead beaver were applied to her.
856 The Bellacoola apparently observed the great industry of the beaver.

To make a baby girl grow up to be a fast berry-picking woman, the ring of skin from between two cuts around a beaver's foreleg was put on her wrist and was left on until it wore off.

To make a boy grow up to be a strong man, a skin of the grizzly bear, was thrown over him, generally by his father.

755 For phlegm on the lungs, more permanent than a simple cold,
825 the patient expectorated in something and some one secretly mixed the fresh phlegm with salmon eggs and put the mixture

3: Smith E-5 (1920-1923) 1925
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

out for the ravens to eat. This was done four times, and if a raven ate it, the patient recovered, according to Captain Schooner's belief. As the call of the raven sounds somewhat like a person affected with phlegm in the throat, this may be a case of sympathetic magic, at any rate it is one of witchcraft. 755 825 [754]

To make the river erode at a certain place in order to break a log jam, a beaver's foot was buried in each of several spots in the place. 789 825

A continuous rain would cease, and the sun would come out, it was said, if the people set fire to a wood-rat's house.

When it rained too much the Bellacoola Indians poked down an ant hill and said, "Give us warm sunshine." They believed this would bring results, but now that Joshua is a Christian he says he does not believe it and says it is useless play talk.

Bad boys or girls, but not adults, would take a dead mouse, warm it over a fire, and rub the warmed mouse on the hands of a baby. This made the baby steal when it grew up. The so-called stealing habits of the mouse were supposed to be transferred to the child. 754 856 825

The still warm body of a freshly killed wood-rat was used in the same way to make a baby, boy or girl, "crazy," and grow up to be a constant thief. The notorious habits of the wood-rat, as well as those of the mouse, were evidently well recognized by the Bellacoola.

To make people crazy, the red squirrel had to be properly used by a shaman and then it possessed strong power. One woman who had been made crazy in this way died in 1887. She did not like the shaman and he did not like her. He stole her apron. She was sorry. He took it into the forest and performed witchcraft because he wanted to spoil her life by making her crazy. He caught a red squirrel alive, possibly in a little basket. He had a box called a "bad box," in which he kept his things of evil power. He put some of the fringe of her apron around the red squirrel and let it run far away. The woman then became crazy and sometimes fell down, but part of the time she seemed well. My Indian informant, Joshua, had seen her. This example of sympathetic 754 756 825

3: Smith E-5 (1920-1923) 1925
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754 magic probably originated from observing the many very erratic
756 and apparently purposeless movements of the red squirrel.
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When one wished to cause the child of one's enemy to grow
754 up to be a quarrelsome person, a yellow jacket's nest was burned
825 and the ashes were rubbed on the face, hands, and arms of the
856 child. When the child grew up, it was believed, he or she would fight with everyone. The yellow jacket's natural defense of it's nest is interpreted as quarrelsome, even by white people.

754 The toad was a powerful medicine for the bad box used in
825 witchcraft.

To make a man or woman die of craziness, one of the hairs of the person's head was put in the body cavity of a disemboweled toad.

[515] To make a person's face swell and superate until death came,
[825] the little pieces of softened red cedar bark used to clean the person's face were put in the body cavity of a disemboweled toad. The idea underlying this was probably the reproduction of the warts of the toad on the face of the person.

[824] To make a person die, a piece of the young shoot of a thimble berry, lost by that person while eating, was put in the mouth of a toad. Death was supposed to take place in half an hour.

754 One very old man, Judas by name, boasts of having killed seven people by means of his bad box used in witchcraft, especially of having caused the death of Mr. John Clayton, who was the first white man to remain long in this area, having kept the Hudson's Bay store at Bella Coola, and later a store of his own, but who died far away from Bella Coola in 1909.

Mrs. Samuel King who died in 1922 was said to have been poisoned by Willie Mack. Her father, Captain Schooner, was said to have stated that Willie would die in July on the anniversary of her death. Willie Mack died in the summer of 1923. Captain Schooner died a few days later. He was said to understand malevolent witchcraft thoroughly. It was said that people often cut off the collars of Willie Mack's shirts. Willie Mack's father was too great a chief so that people were ashamed, and consequently killed Willie by means of witchcraft with something in a bad box.

3: Smith E-5 (1920-1923) 1925
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Charlie West, a Carrier Indian from Ulkatcho, believed that Mrs. Samuel King had been killed by Willie Mack's witchcraft. Alexander Clelenan, a Bellacoola Indian, believed that Willie Mack had been killed by Captain Schooner's witchcraft in revenge for his daughter's death, and that Captain Schooner died of witchcraft on the part of Willie Mack.

That Sir Alexander Mackenzie, the first white man to visit the Bellacoola, performed acts of witchcraft on the beach, was strongly asserted by Joshua, who would not believe me that Mackenzie was probable taking observations, determining his geographical position.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF CANADA,
OTTAWA.

4: Smith E-5 (1920-1923) 1925
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Carrier NE7

B 825 757 by some old Bellacoola men to be good for sores, but my informant did not believe it.

C 825 Among the Ulkatcho it is numerous, but was not used, not even as a medicine.

B 825 A bumble-bee, identified as *Bombus appositus* Cresson, by Dr. H. J. Franklin, among the Bellacoola, was called Tikquanats or the large Skotl, Skotl being the name of three kinds of insects, a bumble-bee, a yellow jacket, and a hornet. It was not taken nor used, and was said to do no harm to people. My informant did not know whether it had a house or not. Neither did he know that it made honey until told so by white men. They say the bee took one of the prickers of the swamp gooseberry for a stinger, but my informant said he did not believe this. He thought it had a sting in its mouth, not in its tail, until I showed him. The Bellacoola have a story that a being considered by a little girl to be a man, but by an elder sister to be a bumble-bee, was once seen coming from the noonday sun. The little girl became blind, B [773] but her eyes appeared to be all right. Many thought she was made blind by too much sunlight when she looked at the man who was a bumble-bee.

C 825 926 Among the Ulkatcho, this bumble-bee was called Whultocho, *Whulto* being the name of a yellow jacket, and *cho* meaning large. *Whus* or *Whis* means pricker. The bumble-bee was not used as fish bait.

B 825 An insect, probably the hornet, is called Slow lowstl, by the Bellacoola, who say it has a little white on the tail and makes a small nest in a tree in July.

The yellow jacket among the Bellacoola was called Qoolalaits (Cloiaclaylaits) (Cloiaclaylaits skotl) while all three kinds of insects, the bumble-bee, the yellow jacket and the hornet, were called Skotl. The yellow jacket was known to make a nest. The nest was used in sympathetic magic or witchcraft as follows: When one wished to cause the child of one's enemy to grow up to B be a quarrelsome person, the nest of the yellow-jacket was burned [754] and the ashes rubbed on the child. When the child grew up he or she would fight with everyone.

6:Boas E-5 (1886-ca. 1890)1892
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

By laying their hands on the nape of a person they are able to tell whether his soul is present or whether it has left the body. If the soul should become weak they are able to restore it to its former vigour. If a person swoons it is believed that his soul has flown away without breaking its shell. The shaman hears its buzzing wings, which give a sound like those of a mosquito. He may catch and replace it in the nape of its owner. If the soul leaves the body without breaking its shell the owner becomes crazy.

The art of shamanism is bestowed by Sag. It is impossible to obtain it by means of fasting and praying, as is the case among the neighbouring tribes, but it is a free gift from the deity. A person who is to become a shaman will fall sick, and, during his illness, Sag will give him a song which must be kept a deep secret. After this he is able to cure diseases. If a person falsely pretends to have received the gift of shamanism, and tries to suck out diseases from a patient, he will fall sick himself.

When asked more closely about the curious difference between this method of obtaining the power and that of the neighbouring tribes my informant said: 'When an Awiky'ô'noq wishes to become a shaman he may go to the mountain where the deity of their shamans resides (probably Ma'tem) who will initiate him. No Bilqula can obtain the art in such a way.'

Sickness is caused by a disease entering the body or by witchcraft (see p. 417). The shaman is able to extract the disease by sucking. A peculiar method of witchcraft, somewhat similar to the 'ek'a' of the Kwakiutl (see Sixth Report of the Committee, p. 612), was described to me as follows: The person who wants to bewitch his enemy endeavours to obtain some of his old clothing, portions soaked by perspiration being considered especially effective. After it is obtained a wolf is killed, and the clothing is put into its mouth, which is then tied up. Then the wolf is placed in a box. This procedure is called amk. Sometimes the clothing or some hair is inclosed in the bone of a wolf or of a dead person. No shaman can counteract these charms.

If a person has been murdered, and a string is tied firmly around the neck of the corpse, the murderer's neck will become diseased and he will be unable to breathe and will die. If sand is strewn in the corpse's eyes and the lids closed over it the murderer will die. If a person has been killed with a knife or arrow, or another weapon, to which some of his blood adheres, the latter is brought into contact with a wolf's head, dog's hair, or anything else that is bad, and then thrown into the fire or put into a frog's or snake's mouth; then the murderer will die.

I add here a few current beliefs:—

Humming indicates that people are talking about one.

Slight ringing of the ears indicates rain, loud ringing good weather.

Twitching of the muscles of the left side of the body is unlucky; of the right side lucky. Twitching of the skin under the eyes indicates that one will cry.

If a dog dreams and howls in its sleep its owner will die.

The breaking of a box without an apparent cause is unlucky.

War.

When a war party was organized the warriors did not paint their faces, but they put on headbands of white cedar-bark and strewed their

8:Boas E-5 (1886-ca. 1890)1897
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to him and takes him up to the sun, where he is initiated. Early one morning he returns, and is heard outside the houses. He has lost all his hair, which, it is believed, has been torn out by the strong breeze blowing in the higher regions. He is quite naked, and bites everyone whom he can lay hold of. If he can not catch anyone he will bite his own arm. It is believed that he has lost his soul, which fled from the body when the spirit came to him. Therefore the shamans must try for four days to recapture his soul. The night after they have recovered it the HAMATSA dances, clothed in a bearskin and wearing a large head ring, heavy bracelets and anklets, all made of red cedar bark. Sometimes he appears wearing the mask of the S'A'LPSTA (fig. 200), the spirit which initiated him. This mask corresponds exactly to that of BaxbakualanuXsi'wae of the Kwakiutl. Some HAMATSA do not bite people, but merely devour raw salmon or tear dogs to pieces and devour them. Those who bite people will also devour corpses. The HAMATSA has to observe a number of regulations. For four years after his initiation he must not gamble. He must stay away from his wife for one year, but this period is being reduced to one month. For two or three months he must not leave his house.

Fig. 199.
MASK OF THE G'I'LPSTA. Bellacoola.
Cat. No. 59999, U. S. N. M. Collected by F. Boas.

The G'IEX (the laugher) and the DA'TIA (the thrower) do not go into the woods to be initiated, but both must fast three days before their first dance. The G'IEX "makes fun of everything" and scratches people with his nails. The DA'TIA carries stones and sticks and breaks household goods and canoes. If he has destroyed some object during the day, he pays for it at night when he dances. The G'IEX and the DA'TIA, after they have danced, must stay in their houses for one month.

If a person transgresses the laws of the KA'LUT, for instance, when the HAMATSA gambles, or when a man performs a dance to which he has no right, also when a person derides the ceremonies or makes a mistake in dancing, his punishment is death. The chiefs assemble in council and the offender is called before the court. After his offense has been proved, he is asked whether he is willing to suffer the penalty of death. If he is not willing and one of his relatives is found willing to take the penalty on himself, the guilty party is spared and the substitute killed in his stead. The execution of the judgment is intrusted to the shaman, who bewitches the condemned person by throwing disease into him or by poisoning him in some other (supernatural?) way. The object thrown by the shaman is a shell, bone, or finger nail, around

8:Boas E-5 (1886-ca. 1890)1897
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the middle of which objects a human hair is tied. If this object strikes the offender, he will fall sick. Blood is believed to collect in his stomach, and if it so happens that he vomits this blood, and with it the disease-producing object, he will recover, and is not molested any further. The masks (not the whistles and other ornaments) used in the kū'nut are burnt immediately at the close of each dancing season. Novices must wear a necklace of red cedar bark over their blankets for a whole year. The masks used in the dances represent mythical personages, and the dances are pantomimic representations of myths. Among others, the thunder bird and his servant, ALXULĀ'XMUM (who wears a mask with red and blue stripes over the whole face from the right-hand upper side to the left-hand lower side, and carries a staff with red and blue spiral lines), appear in the dances. Prominent masks are also Xē'mtsica and his brothers and his sisters; Masmasalā'nix and his fellows, the raven and the nuaxē'mta, and many others.[1]

Fig. 391.
HEADDRESS OF GĀLĀ'.
Haida.
Cat. No. 6000, U. S. N. M. Collected by J. G. Swan.

THE TSIMSHIAN, NĪSQA', HAIDA, AND TLINGIT.

The tribes of this group learned the ceremonial avowedly from the Hē'iltsuq. Although I have not witnessed any part of their ceremonials, the descriptions which I received bring out with sufficient clearness its similarities to the winter ceremonial of the Kwakiutl. The ceremonials seem to be almost identical among all these tribes. It is most complete among the southwestern Tsimshian tribes, particularly the G-ITXĀ'LA, but has been adopted by all the tribes of the coast. It is said that it reached the Haida not more than a hundred years ago.

I will tell here what I learned from the Nisqa'. They have six societies, which rank in the following order: The SEMBALAI'T, MĒ'LEM', HĒLĒ'M, GIXLA', NANĒSTĀ'T, HŌMANA'L, the last being the highest. The SEMBALAI'T is really not confined to the winter ceremonial, but is obtained when a person acquires the first guardian spirit of his clan and performs the ceremony belonging to this event. The tradition of the origin of these ceremonies localizes the events at Bellabella, and it

[1] See "Indianische Sagen von der Nord-Pacifischen Küste Amerikas," page 311, by F. Boas.